

BOARD of CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
COUNTY of CAPE MAY

4 Moore Road, DN-101
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210-1654
(609) 465-1065 ☐ Fax: 465-6189
Website: www.capemaycountygov.net

DANIEL BEYEL, *Director*
Director of Administration,
Revenue & Finance
and Public Works

LEONARD C. DESIDERIO
Director of Planning and
Economic & Capital Planning

RALPH E. BAKLEY, SR.
Education, Library
and Consumer Affairs

RALPH E. SHEETS, JR., *Vice-Director*
Director of Public Safety

GERALD M. THORNTON
Director of Health and
Human Services

STEPHEN O'CONNOR
County Administrator



April 24, 2009

Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo
2nd District, New Jersey
2427 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3002

Re: SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization
High Priority Projects
Beesleys Point Bridges Improvements
Upper Township, Cape May County and
Egg Harbor Township and Somers Point, Atlantic County

Dear Honorable Congressman LoBiondo:

Cape May County Board of Chosen Freeholders seeks your assistance in securing the necessary funds to improve the Beesleys Point Bridges in Upper Township, Cape May County and Egg Harbor Township and Somers Point, Atlantic County. The Beesleys Point Bridges carry Route US 9 over Great Egg Harbor Bay and Drag Channel.

The Beesleys Point Bridges have been closed to vehicular traffic since June 2004 due to the deteriorated structural condition of the bridges. The bridges are deemed structurally deficient with a sufficiency rating of 9.1 for the bridge over Great Egg Harbor Bay and 10.1 for the bridge over Drag Channel. At the time of their closure, the bridges were load posted and carried approximately 1.7 million vehicles per year. The structural steel is heavily corroded, the concrete caissons are unstable, the bridge rail systems does not meet current standards and the electrical/mechanical systems are in need of an overhaul.

The County has entered into an agreement with NJ Department of Transportation to fund a \$20,000,000 rehabilitation program of the bridge that includes the use of State-Aid and tolls. This proposed program provides only the bare minimum of funds necessary to reopen the bridges however more funds are required to increase the level of service provided.

Currently there are only four (4) major roadways that provide access to Cape May County. In the past few years, there have been incidents that have either closed or reduced the capacity of the adjacent Garden State Parkway Bridges. When this happens gridlock occurs in the communities surrounding the bridges including Ocean City. With the closure of the Beesleys Point Bridges, increased congestion has occurred on Roosevelt Boulevard in Upper Township.

Given the few roadways accessing Cape May County, it is imperative that the Beesleys Point Bridges be reopened to provide congestion relief and to assist in the evacuation process should Cape May County ever be impacted by a hurricane. The current plan to evacuate Cape May County in the event of a hurricane calls for reversing the direction of travel on the Garden State Parkway and the Route NJ 47/347 Corridor leaving very limited access to provide the necessary resources to evacuate the large immobile population of the County.

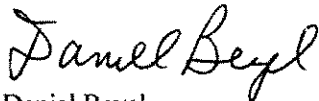
Cape May County intends on holding public information center(s) to discuss the progress of the design and construction of the improvements. These bridges have been the subject of numerous newspaper articles and will continue to be until the bridges are reopened.

The Cape May County Board of Chosen Freeholders strongly supports the Beesleys Point Bridges Improvement Project that will reopen this much needed access to Cape May County. The County is seeking federal funds to help with the structural rehabilitation of the bridges, namely the strengthening of the bridges and replacement of the bridge rail system at a cost of \$7,000,000.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Cape May County Engineer, Dale Foster at (609) 465-1035.

I look forward to working with you on this highly critical and important improvement project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Beyel".

Daniel Beyel
Freeholder Director

DB/DMF/kc



Established 1993
Serving Atlantic, Cape May,
Cumberland and Salem Counties

SOUTH JERSEY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Daniel Beyel, Cape May County
Chairman

Frank Sutton, Atlantic County
Vice-Chairman

Louis N. Magazzu, Cumberland County
Sec'y/Treasurer

Timothy G. Chelius, P.P., AICP
Executive Director

Leonard C. Desiderio, City of Sea Isle City
Lorenzo T. Langford, City of Atlantic City
Jeffrey T. Ridgway, Sr., Township of Pittsgrove
Robert Romano, City of Vineland
Beth E. Timberman, Salem County
Kathleen Aufschneider, SJTA
Pippa Woods, NJ Transit
Thomas A. Wospil, NJDOT

April 24, 2009

Hon. Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress
2427 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515-3002

Dear Congressman LoBiondo:

I am writing in support of the Beesley's Point Bridge Improvements project in Upper Township, Cape May County, and the City of Somers Point, Atlantic County, submitted by Cape May County for consideration as a High Priority Project in the upcoming reauthorization of SAFETEA – LU. Given the few roadways accessing Cape May County, it is imperative that the Beesley's Point Bridges be reopened to provide congestion relief and to assist in the evacuation process should Cape May County ever be impacted by a hurricane. The current plan to evacuate Cape May County in the event of a hurricane calls for reversing the direction of travel on the Garden State Parkway and the Route NJ 47/347 Corridor leaving very limited access to provide the necessary resources to evacuate the large immobile population of the County. Cape May County is seeking \$7,000,000 in federal funding for the project.

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization fully supports the Beesley's Point Bridge Improvements project in Upper Township.

Should this project be included in the SAFETEA – LU reauthorization, all of our public involvement procedures for the Transportation Improvement Program will be maintained, including formal public notice, website posting, and presentation at an open public meeting.

No other federal, State, local, or private funding sources are anticipated to be used to advance this project.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical project, and please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Timothy G. Chelius, P.P., AICP
Executive Director

TGC:mal
Cc: Hon. Daniel M. Beyel, Director, Cape May County Board of Chosen Freeholders